

# FOR VALOR IN THE SERVICE

Drawings by John Edwin Jackson

BY S. TEN EYCK BOURKE AND CHARLES FRANCIS BOURKE

**S**HIPS BOTTOM sure drew a brass-button Port Captain w'en Mr. Dalrymple Downey come to Barnegat to show us bullies how to do our life savin' up to date," said little Tom Welsh, breeches buoy gunner of Ships Bottom Life Saving Station.

The surfmen of Ships Bottom, brawny, big men, in faded uniforms of blue, were smoking round the government Vesuvius in the messroom, and pulling to pieces incidentally the very newest and most modern member of the Barnegat beach crew—for life savers love gossip like sewing circles, and Captain Jem Casco and his seven crack Barnegat boatmen were no exception.

"An' us thinkin' he was goin' to be a son of his grandad, old Cap'n Davy!" the line gunner mourned. "An' we drawed a reg'lar navy engineer, fancy trimmings and all!"

The men grinned appreciatively. Welsh's caustic comment summed up the consensus of opinion of Surfman Dalrymple Downey, an appointment of the Sandy Hook Inspector's.

"Them two names don't match, somehow, Dalrymple an' Davy," Welsh's special chum, Long Johnson, chimed in. "How d'ye ever come to O. K. that pretty boy, Jem," the long surfman demanded of Captain Casco, "specially after seein' him in his Sunday clo'ees?"

For answer the big life Captain heaved himself up out of his armchair and flung open a locker. An old peajacket that hung inside, evidently a prized relic, was the Captain's vindication. On the coat, sea bleached and faded now, hung a service medal, and every man straightened up in his place as Casco read the engraved inscription, which they all knew by heart:

U. S. Life Saving Service  
Keeper David Downey, Barnegat  
For alor—

"They called 'em keepers in old Davy's time, 'stead o' Captains," Casco said softly. "Ye know Dave was summer keeper when he went the long voyage—same year Congress sent him that—

"For Valor in the Service."

For an instant the men sat solemn faced; then the irrepressible Welsh, the chronic cynic of the crew, burst out.

"Huh!" he scoffed. "Dallyrimple'll never get a medal on the front of his coat like his old grandad. He'd be afraid to spile his clothes, swimming on a oar, to save drowning men. What?"

Big Jem Casco blew a whiff from his pipe. "You can't most always tell from looks how a hen can swim," he said grimly. "Ships Bottom will give Downey a chance to show if he'll fit Cap'n Davy's coat. Blood counts," Casco rumbled on, "and I got the Inspector's word for it the boy knows all the latest dodges about life saving by wireless, and hydrographic charts, and all that. That's why they saddled him on Ships Bottom," Captain Casco said sardonically, "to keep ships from bumping on Barnegat Beach, so there won't be no need for rescue work, like Cap'n Davy done."

**C**ASCO closed the sacred locker and went back to his place, and the others smoked in silence, but disapproving still. The rough and ready boatmen of the Laughing Devil Coast had no use for experimental science in life saving, and Surfman D. Downey, trim in his spruce L. S. S. uniform, was like an Annapolis man set down among a lot of old salts.

But the main grouch against D. Downey was something the Inspector could know nothing about when he sent him to the station that guarded the "Graveyard of Ships," last port of call of many a good bark which had driven in to break her back on the treacherous Gridiron Reef, which formed a sort of submerged ship trap in the fairway off the mouth of Barnegat Inlet.

Ships Bottom might have overlooked Downey's dogskin gloves, his "boiled shirts" and cravats; for Ships Bottom was hospitable by profession, save to smugglers and beachcombers, its natural foes. They might have waited, as they had with the Sea Island life jackets, the line-carrying bomb, the forty-horsepower, self-bailing, self-righting motor lifeboat, until force of circumstance proved Downey's merits. But Downey had persistently disagreed with the crew on a very important matter, and one that he might be suspected of being biased about. As Little Welsh put it, there was "ship wreck-

ing in the wind, and a woman in the case, and Surfman Downey wouldn't believe that Skipper Smith had wrecked the schooner Susan, 'cause Miss Sue Smith was Skipper Smith's proud and pretty daughter." And there you had it! And a grizzled boatman was just expressing his opinion of Downey's prospective pa-in law (Downey being on beach patrol) when the gong on the patrol box sounded outside, and the tall form of Surfman Downey stamped into the station, coming off watch.

If the smiling faced, trimly jacketed surfman had heard the last remark, he made no sign. Another man went out to walk patrol to the other end of the three-mile stretch of ocean beach, and Downey clicked his heels like a navyman, saluting the life Captain. It was things like that that riled the old sea dogs round the Vesuvius stove.

"Two ships passed up, Sir, coast liner and a yacht. I gave the yacht a red light: she was too close inshore. The same course," Downey said, smiling, "Cap'n Smith's schooner took to the inlet, when she *accidentally* got caught in that tide current, and swept against the Gridiron."

The guilty silence in the beach station grew a little thicker, also the clouds of tobacco smoke.

Casco grunted. Whether Skipper Smith had run the schooner on the rocks on purpose or not, his was not the only craft lost in the same place. The big Captain of Ships Bottom had troubles of his own to worry him in the stormy weather that was raging off Barnegat.

"There's been three sail craft hit that reef that had no right to get wrecked, let alone go under and drown," the station keeper growled; "like Cap'n Smith's Susan done a'most before we could get to her. Nobody's sayin' he done it *delib'rit*," Casco hastened to add, noting the flush on the young surfman's face. "I only want to warn you boys Cap'n Smith collected insurance on that old lumber schooner, and he's got another now, coming from the Capes, same trade, same route, 'long shore."

"You mean he'd better not have any accident with this new schooner? I understand," said Surfman Downey.

**D**OWNEY did understand. He was under a ban himself, and he knew how Skipper Smith (father of the girl he loved) must feel. Dalrymple Downey was a man before he was a life saver. It meant much to him that pretty Sue Smith, whom Downey had adored from the days of his boyhood visits to his grandfather in Barnegat, would not look with favor on his suit while the cloud hung over her father. A master who loses his ship, short of an act of Providence, is banned on

Barnegat as little short of a murderer. Downey wanted to believe that the accidents were accidents, and in Cap'n Smith's case he meant to prove it.

The smile vanished from the young life saver's face as he turned away, ostensibly to search for his pipe. The sight of Cap'n Davy's faded peajacket, in the locker he had fallen heir to, made Downey feel more kindly to the crew. They had received him as a brother, because the halo still hung over his grandfather's memory. Well, it was up to him to show himself a man, in spite of his "newfangled" ways—for Sue's sake, for his own, and the old life keeper's. And the first thing to do was to get to the bottom of that mysterious Gridiron wrecking.

It had been a habit of Downey's, off watch, to potter round the government wireless station, which was perched up on the sand dunes, a biscuit toss from Ships Bottom. In his hunger for information about the murderous attraction that the Gridiron had suddenly developed for sailing vessels, Downey was half tempted to haul off the big steel cover of the dynamo in the wireless room and use it for a diving bell, to see what ferocious kind of cuttlefish was clawing in ships on the rocks, and then flinging their deckloads of lumber clear over on the other side of the Gridiron. That was what happened with the Susan. It was the worst thing about Skipper Smith's "accident."

"It's all nonsense, anyway," Downey growled to himself, "to think that old Cap would bang into that range o' rock so hard she'd pitch all the planks aboard her clear over where they washed ashore on the beach. He could wreck her without running head on."

That was Ships Bottom's theory, anyway, hit upon as the excuse for their suspicion about Skipper Smith's honesty; as Downey confided to his friend, the wireless operator, who was in love himself and therefore agreed with him.

"What probably happened," Downey said, "she overshot the inlet in that blow, and she hit and stove and sank, and the stuff washed round the end of the Gridiron. Only it's funny the stuff got there so soon—as if it did jump right over the reef," he confessed.

"Well, anyway, old Cappy ain't so young as he used to be—was fifty years ago," the operator said, grinning. "What he needs is a husky young side partner—"

"That's just what worries me. If anything should happen to Sue—I mean Cap'n Smith's new schooner boat, the Susan—" Downey hastily explained. "Two wrecks—by the same skipper—"

"Well, if he's going to do it again, he'll have a mighty good chance this up-trip," the wireless man informed him. "Reports by wireless are fog and thick weather brewing down coast. You Ships Bottom boys better



"This is just one of those cases  
I'm here for, Boys!" snarled Downey.

keep an eye lifting to wind'ard. What makes you keep fussing round my dynamo?" the operator demanded. "Thinking of using it for a boat or a diving bell?"

"That's just what I was thinking of," Downey told him.

He was joking at the time, never dreaming that the thought held life or death; but the inexplicable feeling of some devilish and hitherto unknown danger out there on Gridiron Reef haunted him. It had got three ships in a sou'east gale already; and the signs and omens all heralded a coming sou'easter, howling out of Hatteras latitudes, and getting ready to make kindling wood of the coast.

The thought of it kept Downey awake long after his watch below. The Susan would have to sail true in that wind to dodge the Gridiron Reefs, which stretched in a black, sea-washed hedgerow straight out from Barnegat Inlet into the midnight ocean, a barrier that she had better give a wide berth!

Turning in for forty winks, Downey took a last look at Cap'n Davy's peajacket with its medal for valor that he was rightful heir to—and his face flushed, as he thought of his own anomalous position in the life crew.

"You can't sometimes always tell," he said softly. "Maybe I am finicky and newfangled; but I got a notion that Gridiron mystery's going to give me the chance to grow up to fit Granddad's coat. He was a brave old chap."

**M**ORNING came with weepy weather,—bone-chilling, drizzling rain and rolling coast fog, in spite of the stiff gale blowing in off the ocean. It was a day to make men hug the stove and tell tales of peril and hardship at sea, rather than hang round a sticky, spray-washed beach, and a large, damp motorboat that lay on its automatic truck,—the new sand wagon for lifeboats that had taken the place of the old beach apparatus, as Downey's kind of surfman was supplanting the old salts. Just the same, Ships Bottom liked to slap the big, powerful storm fighter on her white nose, and proclaim with satisfaction, "That's We, Us & Col!"

At four bells in the afternoon watch most of the Ships Bottom bullies were marking time with their sea boots round the big lifeboat. Surfman Downey came plunging down the sand dunes from the wireless with the latest weather report from Washington, when a single startling clang of the station gong sent him scurrying in to the station to answer the beach wire.

"She's coming our way! I feel it in my bones!" he panted, his mind reverting to Captain Smith and the overdue Susan—except a corner of it that he kept for the skipper's little daughter over in Barnegat, all unconscious—or so Downey thought—of her father's peril. Next second he was clamoring for the name of the schooner that had just passed Egg Harbor Station to the south, making heavy weather of it as she fought her way to Barnegat, and his shout of warning rang with the blare of a trumpet.

"She's coming, Boys! It's Cap'n Smith's new schooner, all right, only she's old as the ark—so Egg Harbor says. A big two-sticker, with a stern cabin 'way up in the air. They sheared her bulwarks down to make room for the deckload. Looks like a Roman galley; but she's comin' a running—she's sure a coming, and she's close inshore—too close for comfort!" He slammed up the telephone trumpet to the boom of Casco's orders.

"By glory! we'll go out and shove that schooner off, if she can't get clear—if we swamp the boat a doin' it! Jump her, you bully boys! We've had enough wreckin' on that Gridiron!"

The crew were in their places already, strapped to the thwarts, while the Captain swarmed over the side with the steering oar (used in surf work in place of a rudder), and the three-ton lifeboat dived into the surf like a big white and black Newfoundland, slamming down her twin screws as she lunged.

"All set!" Casco cried. "Now let her snore—straight out!"

Downey knew the hazard the life Captain had in mind,—at the risk of their lives. If they could make the schooner, undermanned as she was, like all coastwise craft, Casco meant to throw three or four men aboard to help her master clear the Gridiron—and Dalrymple Downey meant to be among those who boarded her. "Then if there's a wreck—" he said, and snapped his jaws on the rest of the sentence.

**B**UT neither Downey nor Big Jem Casco had counted—no man could—on the deceptiveness of the

rolling sea fog and the speed of the "new" schooner Susan. When the old lumber wagon ought to be a mile off, she ran past the lifeboat's nose like a creaking old freight train on rusty rails, but running like a turbine liner.

Casco rapped out an order, and in the bow Surfman Downey shed his slickers, and sprang to snatch at her main chains with his boathook. He missed, by six feet, and the lifeboat just saved herself. For a second it was touch and go with the Ships Bottom life saving crew, caught almost between the veering schooner and the imminent reef; for the Susan ran down the rocks on a bowline, as Casco snarled, all his suspicions revived.

"He's tryin' to wreck her! He ain't even saw us—don't want to, darn him!"

All hands stared after the wallowing ship, regardless of their own peril. For a second that seemed to Downey a century she hung on the wind. Then the shout:

"He's luffed her! He ain't! I told ye he meant to bang her aboard, just like the other! Here she comes!"

**T**HE black barrier of the reef lay slantwise of the schooner's path. From the lumber-laid deck came the shouting of men, and Downey recognized the hoarse bellow of Skipper Smith. He saw him, round shouldered in his oilskins, working at the wheel, and suddenly the Susan swung back from the sea—so suddenly that her deckload began slithering over the side. And with all eyes riveted on her the schooner's high, black stern swung away, the high, round stern that overhung them like the poop of an ancient galley, and her lumber-laden bow straightened for the rocks. She lunged like a toy ship suddenly kicked by a great wave—where there was no wave—and in the same motion crashed into the broadside of the ocean hedgerow with the noise of a battleship's gun.

"An' Gawd fergive him for doin' it!" a deep voice chanted. "Wrecked her a purpose, just like he done the other Susan!"

"We seen him! Th' old man's mad!"

Downey wasn't so sure about that—though it showed the only way out for the old schooner master, with any kind of honor; for the Susan was lost, irretrievably crumbling before their eyes.

Still, sick at heart as Downey was, he wouldn't believe. The thing was "out o' natur'," as Casco cried as they worked like mad to get the boat through the back throw of water. To Downey, watching, it had seemed as if someone had thrown a giant grapnel, hauling in the Susan hand over hand, and then sitting on the bow; for the schooner was diving, with her head grinding the rocks. By this time they had fought the boat close enough to haul out the half drowned hands of the Susan's crew in time to save them from dragging down in the undertow. The doomed schooner shot down by the head.

"And old Cappy Smith's went with her! Mebby it's for the best."

The cry cut Downey like a knife. Roaring the

skipper's name, he jerked off his heavy peajacket and seaboots, balancing himself for a dive on the boat's bow. Behind him men murmured, and a man of the schooner's crew cried out:

"Old skipper ducked below—I seen him! Ducked from the wheel into the cabin! I s'pose he went for his papers."

If Captain Smith had risked his life for his ship's papers, the heart's blood of a shipmaster's trade, he was doomed. No need to tell Downey that. Only a black, round section of the schooner's stern stuck up over the sea now, with big air bubbles whitening the water like snow. Like the rounded back of a porpoise, or the shiny turret of a swamped warship, the big black poopdeck loomed up, wallowing lower, as the ship stuck her nose in the bottom like a thrown pike pole, or the black bladder of a harpoon.

"Gawd sake, Boys!" Downey panted, and paused, holding his breath, like the old man drowning beneath him.

Was he drowning? A shrill, faint cry, an old man's terror shriek, came from the sea-washed lump that used to be the schooner's overhang—from inside it! The sound was shut off, as the huge rudder flapped sidewise on its trunions, and the men in the lifeboat held their breaths.

"I tell you it's him!" Downey cried. "He's caught inside the lazarette—swept back through the cabin when she went down!"

"Like Welshy was ketched once under our capsized surfboat. There's air in there!" Casco cried, and the crew gave a great shout.

"If only her nose is on bottom—if she don't go no further—" Casco stopped.

The same thought was in every man's mind. They were professional life savers, and they knew all the accidents of the sea as a boy knows his primer. But there might be air inside that hollow space, enough to keep the old skipper alive for awhile; but it was that same imprisoned air that buoyed the schooner's stern above the surface. There could not be much in that narrow room in the stern, where cordage and cabin supplies are usually kept.

Captain Casco voiced the unspoken fear. "If we chop him out, if we cut a hole in the stern, she'll sink before we get him. Minute the air rushes out—"

**C**HOP your derby hat!" Downey snarled. "This is just one of those cases I'm here for, Boys!"

He was half stripped. He threw his hands over his head and dived deep from the boat's bow straight down along the slanting deck. Under the lee of the rocks, they had hauled the lifeboat closer.

Half a minute went by, when Downey sprang head and shoulders above the surface, grabbing for the boat's gunnel. "I thought so!" he gasped. "The cabin roof's caved in; but the companionway's covered with cordage—blocked. We got to clear a way to old Cap, and there's only one way, short of a diver, and we haven't got one. Hustle her back home, will ye, Jem?"

He was back in the boat, the brawny surfmen blinking at him as if they suddenly saw another kind of Downey. "I told ye he was a Port Captain!" Little Welsh chuckled, and Big Jem hustled the boat shoreward without a word.

Shivering in the stern, Downey whispered to him, the big Captain nodding.

"Mebby so. It might do it. It's life or death, Lad!"

"It's life or death for him every second!" Downey cried. "And think of that poor girl—" He bit off the words. "D'y'e think she'll carry it, Jem? Once we get it out, we can lower it from the main shrouds, good as a derrick."

"We'll try it, anyhow—can't more'n sink us," Casco said grimly. "Dynamite I just thought of, but we'd kill him blowing a hole. Your way's worth trying, Lad—the dynamo cover for a diving bell!"

It had come to Downey as an inspiration, thought of that big hood of the dynamo in the wireless plant. He had spoken of that very possibility to the operator the night before, using the steel hood for a diving bell. No mortal man could ever dive down unarmored and clear that tangle from the cabin companion, the only way to get through to the skipper cooped up in the lazarette. But under that hood of sheeted steel, made with a ring bolt on top and a heavy rim round the bottom where it was ordinarily bolted to the floor, a man could work, if they could lower it with air enough under it till it rested on the schooner's deck.

"Couldn't be more like a diving bell if it was built

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Downey broke away. "Save Dad!" rang in his ears.

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who was watching the game. "Some tennis, that! They're one set all, and Hermia just broke through Reggie's service. That makes it five four."

Markham, teacup in hand, followed the Countess to the balustrade and watched. One would never have supposed from the way she played that this girl had been up since dawn and suffered an accident that had temporarily incapacitated her. Youth was triumphant, vigor, suppleness, and grace marked every movement, the smashing overhand service, the catlike spring to the net, the quick recovery, the long, free swing of the volley from the back-court, all of which showed form of a high order. It was man's tennis that the girl was playing, and Reggie Armistead needed all his cleverness to hold her at even terms. It was an ancient grudge, Markham learned, and an even thing in the betting; but Armistead pulled through by good passing and made the sets deuce.

"Gad! It makes me hot to look at 'em!" said Crosby Downs, fingering at his collar band, his face brick color from the day in the open. "Make 'em stop, somebody." He dropped into a wicker chair and fanned vigorously with his hat. "Lord! Golf is bad enough. Oh, what's the use?" he sighed heavily.

"Been golfing, Crosby?" smiled the Countess.

"Oh, call it that if you like," he growled. "Rotten game, that! Doctor's orders. A hundred and ten today. Couldn't hit the earth, even, and there were acres of it."

"Living up to your reputation, Crosby," sneered Carol Gouverneur. "Sans putt and sans approach?"

"You've struck it, young man. Sans anything but that Weary Willie feelin' and a devourin' thirst. But I lost four pounds," he added more cheerfully, his fingers touching his waistband. "Oh, I'll put it on again tonight at dinner. Silly ass business—this runnin' around in the sun!"

"Quite so," Olga agreed. "But everything we do is silly and asinine."

There was an outburst of applause from the others at a particularly brilliant shot below.

"By George!" cried Westcott. "She's got him. It's Hermia's vantage and forty-love. Oh, Reggie! A love game, by Jiminy! Hermia, you've won me a cool hundred."

THE game was over, and the players shook hands before the net, Hermia laughing gaily, Armistead's eyes full of honest adoration. They were handsome children, those two.

Hermia climbed the steps slowly amid the congratulations of the guests, and smiled as Markham came forward to meet her. She was rosy as a cherub, her bright hair tumbling beneath her crimson hair band.

"Very good of you to come, Mr. Markham," she said breathlessly. "I had my eye in, and couldn't stop. I simply had to beat Reggie, you know." And, then, as her responsibilities recurred to her, "You've met everybody? Mrs. Renshaw, Miss Coddington—Mr. Markham, the Hermit of Thimble Island."

With a laugh she led him away from the others and threw herself in a lounge chair and motioned him to a seat nearby.

"You see," she said gaily, "here I am, quite safe, and ready to mock at all seriousness—the grasshopper entertaining the ant. Do you think you can stand so much gaiety, Mr. Markham?"

"Even an ant must have its moments of frivolity."

"You frivolous!" she smiled.

"I've always wanted to be. It's one of my secret longings. I was born old. Show me how to be young, and I'll give you anything I possess."

"That's tempting. I think I'll begin at once."

He laughed. "At what?"

She scrutinized him from top to toe. "Oh, at your goggles."

He fingered his glasses. "These?"

She nodded.

He took them off and looked at them amusedly.

"That's the first step. You're ten years younger already," she said.

"Oh, am I?"

"Yes. I'm sure of it—when you don't frown."

"And next?"

"You must flirt, Mr. Markham, and make pretty speeches—"

"Pretty speeches!"

"Oh, yes, you must treat every woman as though you adored her secretly, and when ladies visit your studio you mustn't bang the door in their faces."

"Did I do that?"

"Er—figuratively, yes. You were very impolite," she lay back and laughed at him, "There—I feel better! Now we shall be good friends."

He fingered his goggles a moment, and

then his eyes met hers in frank agreement. "I'm glad of that," he said, with a slow smile. "I like you a great deal."

She straightened, her eyes sparkling merrily. "You see? You're improving already. I have great hopes for you, Mr. Markham. She threw a glance at the others and rose. "Here endeth the first lesson. It is time to dress. We will resume after dinner; that is," she added, "if Olga will spare you for a few moments."

"Olga—Madame Tcherny won't mind in the least," he laughed. "If you can make me anybody but myself, she will thank you from the bottom of her heart. Madame Tcherny is already at the point of giving me up as a hopeless case."

"In what respects?"

"Oh, in all respects. I'm a great disappointment to her—" He stopped suddenly. "I mean socially—professionally. You see, I'm not the stuff that successful portrait painters are made of."

"Except perhaps that you really can paint?" she asked over her shoulder.

He shrugged and followed.

AS the guests gathered in the drawing room and on the terrace before dinner it was apparent to Markham that unless he obeyed the injunctions of his small preceptor he would be quite forgotten amid this gay company. But it required little assurance to make oneself at home here where informality seemed to be the rule, and before Hermia and the Countess came down Markham found himself on easy terms with the group he had joined.

Hermia took pains to make her guests aware of the status of Markham in her house by seating him on her right at dinner and paying him assiduous attention.

With a carelessness that put him off his guard Hermia drew him into the general conversation, aroused his sense of humor; until with a story of an experience in France, which he told with a dry wit that well suited him, he found himself the center of interest at the head of the table.

OUT on the terrace over coffee and tobacco the compound slowly resolved itself into its elements, social and sentimental. Markham, scarcely aware of the precise moment when she had appropriated him, found himself in the garden below the terrace with Olga Tcherny. The heavy odor of the roses was about them, unstirred by the land breeze that faintly sighed in the treetops. A

warm moon hung over Thimble Island, its soft lights catching in the ornaments Markham's companion wore, caressing her white shoulders and dusky hair, softening the shadows in her eyes, which peered like a seer's down the path of light where the moonbeams played upon the water.

He had always thought her handsome; but tonight she was a fragment of the night itself, with all its tenderness and its melancholy mystery. He watched her slender figure as she reached forward, plucked a rose, and raised its petals to her lips—a full blown rose, wasting its last hours of loveliness. She fastened it in her corsage and led the way to a stone bench beneath an arbor at the end of the wall, where she sat and motioned to the place beside her.

The accord that existed between these two was unusual because of the total difference in their points of view on life and the habits of thought that made each the negative pole of the other. However unusual Markham may have appeared to a person of Olga Tcherny's training, he was not an unusual young man in the ordinary sense. He had always taken life seriously, from the hour when as a clerk in a broker's office he had started to work at night at the league in New York, with the intention of becoming a painter.

She was very winning tonight, very gentle and womanly, more English than French or Russian, more American than either. Neither of them spoke for a long while. Such words as they could speak would have taken something from the perfection of their background. But Markham thought of her as he had frequently done, thankful again for the benefits of her regard, the genuineness of which she had brought home to him in many material ways.

To Olga alone there was peril in the silence, a peril for the sanity he had taught her, for the pact that she had made with herself. She had eaten the bread and salt of his friendship, and had given him hers. He believed in her, and she could not deceive him. She knew his nature well. She had not been a student of men all her life for nothing. It would have been so easy to lie to him, to befuddle and bewitch him, to bring him to her feet by unfair means! But she had scorned to use them. For her John Markham had been taboo. But there was peril in the silence. She sat looking into the wake of the moon in the water, very quiet, tense, and almost breathless.

*To be continued next Sunday*

## FOR VALOR IN THE SERVICE

*Continued from page 8*

for one," Downey told Casco. "I've been down in 'em. It's heavy enough to sink of its own weight, and it will take down air enough for me inside to clear that wreckage away from the hatch. Then I'll dive in and get the skipper."

"It's the comin' back that counts," Casco said somberly.

"It's worth trying, anyway, and he's dead otherwise," Downey grated, and the lifeboat took the inlet with a rush.

One thing Downey had not counted on. As he made for the wireless plant, with the crew hauling the big boat truck at his heels, a girl's figure fluttered from the crowd round the life station door. The news had spread to Barneget village, and—"Sue!" he cried. "You here?"

What passed was a rush of words; but Surman Downey broke away with his head in the stars. "Save Dad!" rang in his ears.

"And I'll get him, never doubt it!" he swore.

THE men of Ships Bottom never worked faster than then. Crowding into the wireless house, a score of brawny boatmen lifted the big black hood off the dynamo. Loading it on the sand wagon, they ran the truck, with its heavy burden, down the beach and into the water, alongside the lifeboat, and lifted the steel hood bodily aboard. Almost before the crowd on the beach realized what had happened the boat was plowing seaward. Wallowing under its strange freightage, it ran alongside the wreck. Two men swarmed up the main boom, which was still above water, and with block and tackle the hood was swung clear of the boat, ready to lower away.

"She's sinking fast—better hurry!" were Casco's last words, as Downey swung himself under the diving bell, holding on by the flange as it was lowered, belching and booming, down into the sea.

"And I'll bet the Inspector himself never thought of a plan like this to work under water, and burrow into a ship till I can dive into that cabin and fetch out old Cap'n Smith!" Downey chuckled to himself.

He was like a water bug, caught under a tin cup and pushed with it under water. Downey had been down in diving bells. It was part of his training in modern life saving, which foresees every eventuality. But the sudden swerving of the hood startled him. He shuddered, thinking of Skipper Smith, caged like a rat in the schooner's stern, where the supply of air must be getting thicker and thicker, and terribly less. "If she turns over, I'll just have to try again, with less air," he said, gritting his teeth.

But luck was with him, as it sometimes is with men who dare greatly. The swaying stopped as the rim caught on something, and his feet, dangling in the water, landed on the mass of wreckage round the hatch. It was mostly plank ends that had slipped back in their lashings, and he shoved them back from the hatchway one by one, till he could see into the cabin. He was surprised to see how light it was under water. The sea was milky white, transparent.

"Old skipper'll see me when I get to him," he said, remembering Castro's warning. "We can see to swim our way out too."

Looking down the long slope of the deck, he saw planks slipping away from the deck-load, as if drawn one by one from their fastenings; but it helped him to clear the hatch. The compressed air under the hood was growing bad, in the short time he had breathed it. It made him work frantically, thinking of that other, older man in his narrow cell. And now Surman Downey realized that the time had come to take his life into his hands.

Standing on the combing of the roofless cabin, half in and half out of water, he peered down into the gaping hole. Only the after deck lay between him and the man in the lazarette, like an inclined wooden wall. He must duck down under the hatch combing and find the door of the lazarette. If he missed it—

"They'll take us both out together when they raise the ship, that's all!" he said grimly. "What am I dawdling about, anyway?" Downey was not afraid to die. He reached

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